United Nations A/68/990

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 September 2014

Original: English

Sixty-eighth session
Agenda items 14, 18, 19 (a) and 118

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference

Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Note verbale dated 10 September 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to forward a letter dated 29 August 2014 to the Secretary-General from Nawaf Salam, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lebanon, in his capacity as Chair of the Arab Group for the month of August 2014 (see annex).

Identical letters were sent on 29 August 2014 to Mr. John Ashe, President of the General Assembly, Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya and Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary.

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations requests that the annexed letter and its attachments be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 14, 18, 19 (a) and 118.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 10 September 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to write to you in my capacity as Chair of the Arab Group.

I would like to refer to your letter dated 4 August 2014, which included in attachment the letter from the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, the proposal of the Open Working Group and the record of proceedings of the Open Working Group.

I would like also to follow up on the letters addressed by the Arab Group to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group, dated 15 July and 24 July 2014 (see enclosures 1 and 2), as well as the letter addressed by the Arab countries members of the Open Working Group to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group, dated 25 July 2014 (see enclosure 3).

In the above-mentioned correspondence, the Arab Group regretted that the proposed target of ending all forms of foreign occupation and colonial domination was not included under Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), where it naturally belongs. In this respect, the Group went along with the approval of sending the proposal on sustainable development goals to the General Assembly, with the understanding that target 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere) applies to ending foreign occupation, as it is one of the most extreme forms of violence. The Group's understanding also is that target 16.3 (Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all) applies to the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab occupied territories, through the full implementation of all the General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council resolutions on ending foreign occupation and colonial domination in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other occupied Arab territories, as well as the application of the relevant provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions to the occupied Arab territories.

The Arab Group would like also to express its great concern regarding the absence of any reference to the issue of "illegal unilateral economic sanctions", under Goal 16, which was raised by Arab countries. This specific issue has been a major impediment that severely affected the economy and development of many countries, and played a big role in undermining the sovereignty of States. As Goal 16 calls for providing access to justice for all, this issue should be addressed and duly reflected in the report of the Open Working Group.

The Arab Group requested that this statement be registered as part of the official record and in the report of the Open Working Group. Nevertheless, neither the letter, nor the Arab Group position and reservations were reflected in the report of the Open Working Group.

The Arab Group would like to reiterate its request to have its positions duly reflected, as well as that of its members, in the report of the Open Working Group.

The Group reserves the right to take any appropriate measure, in case its positions are not duly reflected in the report.

The Arab Group requests the circulation of the present letter, including its attachments, as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 14, 18, 19 (a) and 118, and further requests the attachment of the present letter to the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Enclosure 1

Letter dated 15 July 2014 from the Chair of the Arab Group to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

In my capacity as Chair of the Arab Group, I wish to address to your excellency a letter enclosed with remarks to be considered at the outcome of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

(*Signed*) Mansour **Alotaibi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

At the outset, the Arab Group would like to express its sincere appreciation for the efforts you are undertaking, and the leadership you are showing in steering the work of the Open Working Group. We are confident that you will do your utmost to develop a consensual document addressing the concerns of all countries.

In this regard, you would recall the statement by the Arab Group delivered during the 11th meeting of the OWG. The Arab Group acknowledged in the statement the intrinsic link between development, peace and security; however, the Group reiterated that a detailed discussion on that matter which goes beyond reflecting the intrinsic link between development, peace and security in the preamble, should take place in the framework of the post-2015 development agenda, not the sustainable development goals, due to the lack of mandate from the Rio+20 Conference.

Moreover, the Arab Group reaffirmed that, by all means, any discussion on peace and security should take into consideration and address Arab concerns in this regard, in particular those related to ending foreign occupation and fighting terrorism.

We reiterate our commitment, expressed in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals of 2010, the Rio+20 outcome document, The Future We Want, to take further effective measures and actions, in conformity with international law, to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment and are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and must be combated and eliminated.

The Arab Group notices that despite lack of consensus, Goal 16 entitled "Achieve peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice for all, and effective and capable institutions" remains in the working document. In this context, the Arab Group wishes to include under this goal the following targets, in line with its statement delivered by the Group on 9 May 2014:

1. Immediate end to all forms of colonial domination and foreign occupation in order to achieve sustainable development for all;

2. Strengthen adherence to international law by all stakeholders including States, international organizations and financial institutions, to achieve an international law rule-based order;

3. Intensify international cooperation in the field of countering terrorism, in particular addressing its root causes as an obstacle to achieve sustainable development.

The Arab Group cannot accept a selective approach with regard to the relationship between development, peace and security.

The Arab Group expects that these suggested targets will be duly reflected in the working document.

Chair of the Arab Group

(*Signed*) Mansour **Alotaibi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations

Enclosure 2

Letter dated 24 July 2014 from the Chair of the Arab Group to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

In my capacity as Chair of the Arab Group, I wish to address to your excellency a letter enclosed with remarks to be considered at the outcome of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

(*Signed*) Abdulaziz **AlAjmi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Once again, the Arab Group would like to acknowledge the leadership you have shown in steering the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals throughout its meetings.

However, and with respect to the proceedings of the conclusion of the last meeting on 19 July 2014, the Arab Group regrets the fact that the request made by Tunisia to take the floor on behalf of the Group was denied. This prevented the Group from expressing its views on the final version of the proposed set of sustainable development goals before adoption.

The Arab Group would like to refer to its letter addressed to you on 15 July 2014, as well as to the Arab Group's interventions and comments in this regard during the last meeting of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, held from 14 to 19 July 2014, and further regrets that the issue of ending all forms of foreign occupation and colonial domination was not included under Goal 16 on "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels", where it naturally belongs.

In this respect, the Group went along with the approval of sending the document to the General Assembly, with the understanding that target 16.1 on "Significantly reducing all forms of violence", applies to ending foreign occupation, as it is one of the most extreme forms of violence. The Group's understanding also is that target 16.3 on "Promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels" applies to the situation in the occupied territories in Palestine and other Arab territories, through the full implementation of all the General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council resolutions on ending foreign occupation and colonial domination in the occupied territories in Palestine and other Arab occupied territories, as well as the application of the relevant provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions, to the Arab occupied territories.

This is particularly relevant in view of the current tragic situation in Gaza where thousands of innocent civilians, mostly women, children and the elderly, have been living under an illegal blockade for several years, and are currently brutally bombarded and killed by the occupation forces.

The Arab Group requests that this statement be registered as part of the official record and of the report of the Open Working Group.

(*Signed*) Abdulaziz **AlAjmi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations

Enclosure 3

Letter dated 25 July 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter addressed to your excellencies from the Arab countries members of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, with respect to addressing the issue of foreign occupation in the proposed set of sustainable development goals endorsed by the Open Working Group on 19 July 2014.

(*Signed*) Mootaz Ahmadein **Khalil**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

At the outset, our countries, the Arab members of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, would like, above all, to acknowledge the leadership you have shown in steering the work of the Open Working Group throughout its meetings.

However, and with respect to the proceedings of the conclusion of the last meeting on 19 July 2014, our countries regret the fact that the request made by Tunisia to take the floor on behalf of the Arab Group was denied. This prevented the Group from expressing its views on the final version of the proposed set of sustainable development goals before adoption.

We further regret that the issue of ending all forms of foreign occupation and colonial domination was not included under Goal 16 on "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels", where it naturally belongs. In this context, our countries would like to refer to the letters addressed to you by the Arab Group on 15 and 24 July 2014, as well as to the Arab Group's interventions and comments in this regard during the last meeting of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, held from 14 to 19 July 2014, and reaffirm the Arab Group's position on this matter.

In this respect, our countries went along with the approval of sending the document to the General Assembly, with the understanding that target 16.1 on "Significantly reducing all forms of violence" applies to ending foreign occupation, as it is one of the most extreme forms of violence. Our understanding also is that target 16.3 on "Promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels" applies to the situation in the occupied territories in Palestine and other Arab territories, through the full implementation of all the General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council resolutions on ending foreign occupation and colonial domination in the occupied territories in Palestine and other Arab occupied territories, as well as the application of the relevant provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions to the Arab occupied territories.

This is particularly relevant in view of the current tragic situation in Gaza where thousands of innocent civilians, mostly women, children and the elderly, are under an illegal blockade and brutally bombarded and killed by the occupation forces.

Our countries, being the Arab members of the Open Working Group, request that this statement be registered as part of the official record and of the report of the Open Working Group.

(*Signed*) Sabri **Boukadoum**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Mootaz Ahmadein **Khalil**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Omar **Hilale**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Abdallah **Al-Mouallimi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Mohamed Khaled **Khiari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Lana **Nusseibeh**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of United Arab Emirates to the United Nations